



Indianapolis
Gregory A. Ballard, Mayor

NEWS RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT:

Marc Lotter

Director of Communications

Office of Mayor Greg Ballard – City of Indianapolis

Marc.Lotter@indy.gov C: (317) 726-6589

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Mayor Ballard Announces Early Education and Public Safety Initiative

INDIANAPOLIS – Calling the recent trend of violence a plague on society, today Mayor Greg Ballard introduced an initiative containing a holistic approach to making Indy a safer place to live and work.

“We, as society, can no longer keep doing the same things over and over again and expect different results,” said Mayor Ballard. “Crime in American cities is a symptom of larger societal problems. My plan will address the larger issues by investing in pre-school, helping dropouts and those expelled from school, adding more police officers and stopping the revolving door of criminals who keep committing crimes and getting re-arrested in Indy.”

Earlier this year the bi-partisan IMPD Staffing Commission, created by the City-County Council, recommended a funding model to provide sustainable funding to hire new IMPD Officers. That proposal will be introduced to the City-County Council for consideration at its next meeting on August 18. In an address today at Old City Hall, Mayor Ballard outlined a plan to use that funding to both hire new officers and address the societal issues that lead to poverty and crime.

Mayor Ballard believes the issue of crime and violence in American cities are tied to three buckets of responsibility – prevention, protection and punishment.

Bucket #1 – Prevention:

- Nearly double pre-school scholarships and expand eligibility for low-income families
- Help students who have been expelled, suspended or drop out of school
- Change Indy curfew ordinance
- Expand conflict resolution training through Peace Learning Center and Indy Parks
- Launch regional heroin awareness campaign

Bucket #2 – Protection:

- Hire 280 new IMPD officers by 2018
- Encourage people to report people illegally possessing guns to CrimeStoppers
- Full-time SWAT team

Bucket #3 – Punishment:

- Urge State to enact mandatory minimum sentence of 20-years for criminals who use a gun
- Invest up to \$10M for courts, prosecutors, probation and community corrections

The bi-partisan IMPD Staffing Commission, created by the City-County Council, recommends an increase in the Public Safety Income Tax by 0.15% and elimination of the Local Homestead Tax Credit. If the Council approves both of these proposals, the average Indy resident would pay an additional \$7.16 per month in taxes.

Mayor Ballard earlier this year announced the “Your Life Matters” campaign to bring together community leaders to address some of the broader problems that lead to criminal activity. The task force, being co-chaired by Tanya Bell of Indiana Black Expo and Jamal Smith of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission, is working on a program to increase mentoring, summer jobs programs, parental assistance and school dropout/expulsion issues. The group is to prepare a report to the Mayor due in late October.

[Click here](#) for additional details about Mayor Ballard’s proposal.

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